



2019-2020 School Action Fund - Planning
COMPETITIVE GRANT Application Due 5:00 p.m. CT, May 2, 2019

NOGA ID

Authorizing legislation

Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by P.L. 114-95, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Title I, Part A, Section 1003, School Improvement

Applicants must submit one original copy of the application and two copies of the application (for a **total of three copies of the application**). All three copies of the application **MUST** bear the signature of a person authorized to bind the applicant to a contractual agreement. **Applications cannot be emailed.** Applications must be received no later than the above-listed application due date and time at:

Document Control Center, Grants Administration Division

Texas Education Agency

1701 N. Congress Avenue

Austin, TX 78701-1494

Grant period from

July 1, 2019 to July 31, 2020

☒ Pre-award costs are not permitted.

Required Attachments

No attachments are required to be submitted with this application.

Amendment Number

Amendment number (For amendments only; enter N/A when completing this form to apply for grant funds):

Applicant Information

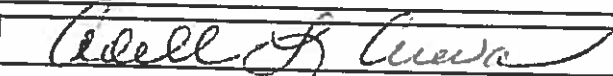
Organization **Benavides ISD** CDN **066901** Vendor ID **74-6000360** ESC **2** DUNS **159382647**
Address **106 W School St** City **Benavides** ZIP **78341** Phone **3612563003**
Primary Contact **Adell Cueva** Email **adell.cueva@benavidesisd.net** Phone **3612563003**
Secondary Contact **Christina Perez** Email **cperez@benavidesisd.net** Phone **3612563003**

Certification and Incorporation

I understand that this application constitutes an offer and, if accepted by TEA or renegotiated to acceptance, will form a binding agreement. I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and that the organization named above has authorized me as its representative to obligate this organization in a legally binding contractual agreement. I certify that any ensuing program and activity will be conducted in accordance and compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

I further certify my acceptance of the requirements conveyed in the following portions of the grant application, as applicable, and that these documents are incorporated by reference as part of the grant application and Notice of Grant Award (NOGA):

- ☒ Grant application, guidelines, and instructions ☒ Debarment and Suspension Certification
☒ General Provisions and Assurances ☒ Lobbying Certification
☒ Application-specific Provisions and Assurances ☒ ESSA Provisions and Assurances requirements

Authorized Official Name **Adell Cueva** Title **Superintendent**
Email **adell.cueva@benavidesisd.net** Phone **3612563003**
Signature  Date **05/06/2019**

Grant Writer Name **Adell Cueva** Signature  Date **05/06/2019**

☒ Grant writer is an employee of the applicant organization.

☐ Grant writer is not an employee of the applicant organization.

RFA # **701-19-107** SAS # **438-20**

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GRANTS ADMINISTRATION

Shared Services Arrangements**X** SSAs are not permitted for this grant.**Identify/Address Needs**

List up to three quantifiable needs, as identified in your needs assessment, that these program funds will address. Describe your plan for addressing each need.

Quantifiable Need	Plan for Addressing Need
Benavides High School had low percentages of students who achieved a Meets or Masters grade level standards on STAAR - 33% in Reading; 22% in Math; 31% in Science; 38% in Social Studies; and 38% in Writing	Partner with a high-quality operator following a call for quality schools process to operate Benavides High School to ensure a wider range of successful program options for students and families. Bolster professional learning communities by leveraging increased capacities across the partner network.
165 students currently attend this low-rated "C" campus	Partner with high-quality operator following a call for quality schools process to operate Benavides High School to ensure a wider range of successful program options for students and families and to improve outcomes for all subgroups.
Staff and student daily attendance remains below the state and regional average.	Partner with high-quality operator following a call for quality schools process to operate Benavides High School to ensure a wider range of successful program options for students and families.

SMART Goal

Describe the summative SMART goal you have identified for this program (a goal that is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely), either related to student outcome or consistent with the purpose of the grant.

By the Fall of 2021 Benavides High School have been under the successful operation of an approved/authorized partner and will be rated a B under the Texas accountability system.

The purpose of this work and the goal is to increase the number of students in A and B rated schools by 50%. This grant will enable us to make this possible not only for student in our district but for students across the geographical region who will have access to the campus.

Measurable Progress

Identify the benchmarks that you will use at the end of the first three grant quarters to measure progress toward meeting the process and implementation goals defined for the grant.

First-Quarter Benchmark

- Meet with minimum of 75% of campus staff to explain the call for quality schools process and hear feedback and suggestions.
- Hold 2 community forums to explain the call for quality schools process and hear feedback and suggestions.
- Develop a school performance framework with stakeholder input in order to shape the call for quality schools process.
- Finalize and post an in-district charter application as the launch of our call for quality schools process.
- Create a partner selection committee with representation from each stakeholder group.

Measurable Progress (Cont.)**Second-Quarter Benchmark**

- Close the call for quality schools process and conduct of review of all applications
- Conduct private interviews with high-quality applicants
- Select a final choice to operate the campus and conduct 2 community forums for the selected partner to present to the community.

Third-Quarter Benchmark

- Board of trustees authorizes an in-district charter to the partner chosen from the call for quality schools process
- Execute contract with authorized partner

Project Evaluation and Modification

Describe how you will use project evaluation data to determine when and how to modify your program. If your benchmarks or summative SMART goals do not show progress, describe how you will use evaluation data to modify your program for sustainability.

The summative SMART goal and benchmarks will be continuously monitored by the authorized partner, school leaders, district staff and the board. School leaders will have access to comprehensive data dashboards that enable the use of real-time data to inform campus decision making. Dashboards will incorporate information from all schools, collaborating institutions of higher education and certification partners and provide clear and up-to-date data on each student's progress throughout their experience to ensure they are on track. School leadership will have the autonomy, with support from authorized partner and district staff, to adjust school and classroom strategies as we work towards our goals. In addition to these school based supports, partner staff will assume a project manager role to ensure that our benchmarks remain on track and that school leaders and teachers are well supported throughout the process.

Benavides ISD will reflect these and other goals in the performance contract giving operational authority to the authorized partner. Failure to meet the agreed upon goals in the agreed upon time-frame may lead to probation or revocation of the operating contract.

The authorized partner will continuously use evaluation data to ensure that the program can be effectively modified for sustainability.

As the authorizer, the board of trustees will conduct an annual review of the charter and will formally determine renewal or revocation decisions every 3 years. The district will make decisions based on a school action planning process in context of the state accountability system and a school performance framework. We will enhance this competency through participation in the Texas Authorizer Leadership Academy (TALA).

Statutory/Program Assurances

The following assurances apply to this grant program. In order to meet the requirements of the grant, the grantee must comply with these assurances.

Check each of the following boxes to indicate your compliance.

- ☒ The applicant provides assurance that program funds will supplement (increase the level of service), and not supplant (replace) state mandates, State Board of Education rules, and activities previously conducted with state or local funds. The applicant provides assurance that state or local funds may not be decreased or diverted for other purposes merely because of the availability of these funds. The applicant provides assurance that program services and activities to be funded from this grant will be supplementary to existing services and activities and will not be used for any services or activities required by state law, State Board of Education rules, or local policy.
- ☒ The applicant provides assurance that the application does not contain any information that would be protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) from general release to the public.
- ☒ The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all Statutory Requirements and TEA Program Requirements as noted in the 2019-2020 School Action Fund - Planning Program Guidelines.
- ☒ The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all Performance Measures, as noted in the 2019-2020 School Action Fund - Planning Program Guidelines, and shall provide the Texas Education Agency and the matched school action technical assistance provider, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.
- ☒ The applicant provides assurance that it will contract and work in good faith with the TEA vetted and matched school action technical assistance provider and agency-provided technical assistance.
- ☒ The applicant will budget at least 25% of the total award as "Matched School Action Technical Assistance Provider" on schedule 6200.
- ☒ The applicant assures that contracts with matched school action technical assistance provider will be negotiated and signed by October 1, 2019.
- ☒ The applicant assures that a project manager will be identified. Please note: this position may be funded by other fund sources.
- ☒ The LEAs pursuing a partner-managed model assure that a financial spending analysis will be performed in accordance with TEA requirements.
- ☒ The applicant assures that all fidelity of implementation revisions will be complete on or before October 15, 2019.
- ☒ The applicant assures access will be provided for onsite visits to the LEA and campus by TEA and its contractors.
- ☒ The applicant assures attendance and participation in grant orientation meetings, technical assistance meetings, other periodic meetings of grantees, and sharing of best practices through the TEA program office.
- ☒ The applicant assures that an implementation plan, using a TEA approved format, will be developed with the school transformation partner by June 1, 2020.
- ☒ The applicant assures partners operating campuses under the partner-managed option must commit to Lone Star Governance participation.
- ☒ The applicant assures Pre-K "New Schools" will designate a feeder comprehensive campus by May 1, 2020.
- ☒ **For LEAs pursuing the Create a new school action model:** The applicant assures that enrollment at a new school must prioritize students attending or zoned to a 2018-2019 Comprehensive and/or Targeted school.
- ☒ **For LEAs pursuing the Partner-managed model:** The applicant assures commitment to the Adoption of Model Authorizing policy and participation in the Texas Authorizer Leadership Academy.

Statutory Requirement

Please refer to the Program Guidelines page 9 and address the six questions below:

1)

The district has created an improvement plan through the 2019 school year. The district, in collaboration with the authorized partner, will conduct an annual needs analysis and create a new school improvement plan each year aligned to the goals of the partnership.

To carry out its school support and improvement activities, Benavides ISD will launch a new partner managed high school to be operated by an authorized partner. The partnership will empower educators with the tools to adapt to their students' individual needs strategically, flexibly, and quickly. This autonomy, along with the greater access to expertise and resources that a partnership will enable, will allow the new high school to accelerate student academic achievement and help serve students effectively. In addition to the focus on educator autonomy, the partner develop cross district professional development opportunities for teachers and leaders. This partnership will also bring a new option for families who have only had access to a single comprehensive high school in the past. There is a lot of interest in a P-Tech style academy being brought to Benavides.

2)

The district has, and will continue to, establish milestones, identify evaluation methods, set associated indicators of accomplishments, and develop data collection processes. The milestones and indicators will be tied directly to the School Improvement Plan. By monitoring these milestones and indicators, the district will also be able to monitor the implementation of the improvement plan. Furthermore, as part of the services and support that are offered by our redesign partner we will be able to leverage additional monitoring from an external 3rd party.

a)

The milestones and associated indicators will be tied directly to the School Improvement Plan. By monitoring these milestones and indicators, utilizing the defined evaluation methods and data collection processes, the district will also be able to monitor the implementation of the improvement plan. Furthermore, as part of the services and support that are offered by our redesign partner we will be able to leverage additional monitoring from an external 3rd party.

b)

The School Improvement Plan will be used as a working document that will be utilized to monitor progress over time. The principal will review the school improvement plan with the authorized partner and superintendent on a regular basis and will provide regular updates on the implementation of the plan. If needed, revisions will be made that are necessary to ensure the plans stay on course. Changes may include adjusting the time table and/or changes to operational practices leveraged by the performance contract with the partner

3)

The district's purchasing department is responsible for facilitating the processes governed by state and federal law to ensure the rigorous recruitment, screening, selection, and evaluation of all external partners. The superintendent has the authority to commit district funds for goods and services. Any single budgeted item that costs more than the threshold outlined in board policy shall require board approval. Competitive bids may also be solicited either by means of a request for proposal or a competitive sealed bid. Current bid/proposal solicitations are announced for a minimum of two consecutive weeks.

In selecting any partners to operate a campus under and in-district charter the district will implement a rigorous call for quality schools process utilizing all of the model policies and applications from the Texas Education Agency. All processes will comply with TEC Chapter 12, Sub-chapter C.

Statutory Requirement (Cont'd)

4)

Benavides ISD will align and complement existing school improvement resources, goals, and interventions including: personnel, technology and infrastructure, curriculum, software, facilities, and training in order to support and effectively deliver a comprehensive School Improvement Plan. All resources allocated to Benavides Elementary School will be utilized in support of the School Improvement Plan and the goals of the campus, district, and authorized partner. All funding will be strategically utilized based on lifespan and allowable uses.

5)

The district will negotiate and execute a formal contract with an authorized partner, following a successful annual call for quality schools and authorizing process. This contract and partnership will qualify for benefits under TEC 11.174 (SB1882) to operate the new high school through a Sub-chapter C authorization with complete operational flexibility and autonomy to implement an effective turnaround. District and campus data illustrates that the school has a unique student population that has its own unique obstacles and needs. Therefore, the school and the authorized partner will be provided the flexibility to modify their campus policies and instructional methods in order to improve student outcomes. The partnership will empower educators with the tools to adapt to their students' individual needs strategically, flexibly, and quickly. This autonomy, along with the greater access to expertise and resources that the partnership will enable, will allow the new school to accelerate student academic achievement and help serve students effectively.

6)

We have would like to launch a new high school model in partnership with an authorized operator under the partnership-managed model if they are approved through our call for quality schools authorizing process. In alignment with this school action model, Benavides ISD and the partner will incorporate evidence-based strategies during the implementation of the program that are proven to provide teachers, students, and school leaders access to the latest research-based technology and curriculum that is geared to prepare students to be an active member of today's 21st century society; and offer a strong support system to new and struggling teachers so that they can bring about improvements in student outcomes. Some of these strategies include: blended learning strategies, project based learning, and a balanced literacy approach, Benavides ISD and the partner will also be taking action on the recommendations from TEA's Rural Schools Task force. Our intent is to seek a partner that will be able to successfully launch a P-Tech type program in our district.

TEA Program Requirements

TEA Program Requirement 1: Please identify one of the following eligible school action models. Once selected, please indicate whether the school action model will be district or partner managed. ***Note:** The district or partner managed option should only be selected if the LEA chooses from one of the following school action models: "Restart a struggling school" or "Create a new school". Additionally, the LEA may only select the partner-managed option for the "Replicate a successful school model".

Select one school action model below:

- ☐ Restart a struggling school
- ☒ Create a new school
- ☐ Replicate a successful school (must select Partner-managed option)
- ☐ Reassign students from a struggling school (type of model management does not apply)
- ☐ Exploratory planning (type of model management does not apply)

Select how model will be managed:

- ☐ District-managed
- ☒ Partner-managed

TEA Program Requirement 2: Please describe the following:

a) Please describe the evaluation process and criteria utilized for selecting the school action model.

When determining which model to select, we discussed how the school action meets the unique needs of our community, and how the action will result in an improved learning environment. Our intent is for our school actions to be more strategic, successful, and sustainable. The district will go through an annual strategic school action planning process based on the state's performance framework in order to determine that this is the formal action we will take and any future district school actions.

As a persistently struggling campus in a region with few other options for our families, partnering with a high-quality operator and launching a new high school is the strongest option for us to leverage in our quest to improve outcomes for our students. In rural Texas the school district is the heartbeat of the community — the place we host community functions, celebrate student accomplishments, and generally gather. There is little industry in our community and few places for our students to intern, apprentice, or be exposed to different careers or new innovations. Many in our communities sometimes drive an hour for basic family needs. While all schools face challenges, rural schools often face funding and resource constraints, have older facilities, and struggle recruiting teachers to an area where there are limited housing opportunities. We aren't always able to offer differentiated or collaborative professional learning to our staff. We may be able to offer a couple of strands of programming, but unlike an urban or suburban district, we are limited in the offerings for our students. And yet, we need our students to be able to compete nationally and internationally. For these reasons, we will create a partnership to provide our students with a multitude of options they would not receive otherwise.

We determined that we needed a model that will leverage economies of scale, provide new opportunities for students, provide differentiated professional development opportunities for teachers that we are unable to provide locally, and allow for representation from the Benavides community.

TEA Program Requirements

b) Please describe the district vision for improving the campus(es) or engaging in a thoughtful planning process to implement a school action.

Our vision is to take actions that are strategic, successful, and sustainable in order to increase the number and percentage of students in A and B rated schools. We hope to be one of the first rural System of Great Schools districts in the country.

The vision is to launch a new high school within Benavides ISD to be managed by a partner who will successfully implement a P-Tech type program. Benavides Elementary School is a Comprehensive rated school in our district and we must seek to improve outcomes vertically across our district to ensure that gains made at the new PK center, and Benavides Elementary are sustained through secondary school. The district also expects the Benavides High School will be rated as a targeted campus when those ratings are released. It is important for us to be proactive in our district improvement effort and this grant will allow us to do that.

Launching a new school is not for students to pass a state standardized test; the community selected this model because it wanted students to acquire conceptual knowledge through a hands-on and minds-on approach to teaching. The charter will be designed to develop students' conceptual understanding, develop abstract and problem-solving skills, develop innovators and creativity, create an environment where it is safe for students to take risks, and promote student discourse where students are active learners.

Research shows that children learn best and are better prepared when the instruction is tailored to meet their individual needs. Our students will be provided with greater opportunities to be successful: Blended Learning, Project-based Learning, and Balanced Literacy Instruction.

c) Please describe how the grant aligns to and accelerates the district's broader strategy and theory of action.

This partnership will act as our guide as we redesign the district's broader strategy and theory of action. All of our work will align to the goals of the partnership and this grant will enable us to effectively implement the replication with efficacy. We aim to provide rural students high-quality opportunities early in their learning leading to post-secondary success. We deeply believe that students from rural communities should have every opportunity possible leading to success. Rural students should be exposed to the best teachers in America. Rural schools are stronger through collaboration, and rural communities nurture big dreams through innovation.

As we are working on implementing a System of Great Schools theory of action, this grant will enable us to more strategically engage in that change management work. We will build our capacity to manage school performance, expand great options, ensure access to those options, and foster partner autonomy.

d) Please identify the district staff member to coordinate the planning grant and the qualifications of the identified staff member.

Currently, the superintendent will coordinate the grant. The district will work to identify a full time project manager and set up an office similar to an innovation or transformation office with the leader of that office reporting directly to the superintendent. This person will support all authorizing and charter review processes.

Equitable Access and Participation

Check the appropriate box below to indicate whether any barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups that receive services funded by this grant.

- ☒ The applicant assures that no barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups receiving services funded by this grant.
- ☐ Barriers exist to equitable access and participation for the following groups receiving services funded by this grant, as described below.

Group Barrier

Group Barrier

Group Barrier

Group Barrier

PNP Equitable Services

Are any private nonprofit schools located within the applicant's boundaries?

- ☐ Yes ☒ No

If you answered "No" to the preceding question, stop here. You have completed the section. Proceed to the next page.

Are any private nonprofit schools participating in the grant?

- ☐ Yes ☒ No

If you answered "No" to the preceding question, stop here. You have completed the section. Proceed to the next page.

5A: Assurances

- ☒ The LEA assures that it discussed all consultation requirements as listed in Section 1117(b)(1) and/or Section 8501(c)(1), as applicable, with all eligible private nonprofit schools located within the LEA's boundaries.
- ☒ The LEA assures the appropriate Affirmations of Consultation will be provided to TEA's PNP Ombudsman in the manner and time requested.

5B: Equitable Services Calculation

1. LEA's student enrollment	<input type="text"/>
2. Enrollment of all participating private schools	<input type="text"/>
3. Total enrollment of LEA and all participating PNPs (line 1 plus line 2)	<input type="text"/>
4. Total current-year grant allocation	<input type="text"/>
5. LEA reservation for direct administrative costs, not to exceed the grant's defined limit	<input type="text"/>
6. Total LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 4 minus line 5)	<input type="text"/>
7. Per-pupil LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 6 divided by line 3)	<input type="text"/>
LEA's total required ESSA PNP equitable services reservation (line 7 times line 2)	<input type="text"/>

Request for Grant Funds

List all of the allowable grant-related activities for which you are requesting grant funds. Include the amounts budgeted for each activity. Group similar activities and costs together under the appropriate heading. During negotiation, you will be required to budget your planned expenditures on a separate attachment provided by TEA.

PAYROLL COSTS (6100)**BUDGET**

Strategic compensation stipends	100,000

PROFESSIONAL AND CONTRACTED SERVICES (6200)

TEA Matched Technical Assistance Provider (meets 25% requirement)	100,000
Approved partner funds for planning	100,000

SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS (6300)

Supplies and materials	50,000
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OTHER OPERATING COSTS (6400)

Site visits to exemplar SGS districts and school models and to replication site	20,000
Board training and development (Lone Star Governance workshops)	5,000

CAPITAL OUTLAY (6600)

Funds to maintain, repair, or upgrade capital assets for a successful replication	25,000

Total Direct Costs 400,000

Indirect Costs

TOTAL BUDGET REQUEST (Direct Costs + Indirect Costs) 400,000